

**Selection Statement for Customer and Employee Relations (CaER) Directorate
Support Services**

RFP 8-1-1-CD-D1548

On January 25, 2002, I along with other senior officials of Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) met with the Source Evaluation Committee (SEC) appointed to evaluate proposals in connection with the Customer and Employee Relations (CaER) Directorate Support Services procurement.

I. Background

The SEC members were appointed by the Director of the MSFC Procurement Office and included representation from the Customer and Employee Relations Directorate, Space Transportation Directorate and the Procurement Office. To aid in the evaluation, the SEC appointed a business committee and advisors from appropriate disciplines to provide assessments of proposal strengths and weaknesses. The SEC utilized information from the business committee and advisors in conjunction with the predetermined evaluation factors and subfactors in formulating its assessment of the strengths and weaknesses.

The RFP for the MSFC CaER services was released on August 8, 2001. The RFP required contractors to provide mission services and indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) effort related to Customer and Employee Relations Directorate. The RFP also stated that the effort would be performed under a performance-based, cost-plus-incentive-fee contract. The contract period of performance will consist of one base year and four one-year options. On September 7, 2001, proposals were received from the following firms:

AD Rendon Communications, Inc.
AI Signal Research, Inc.
Analytical Services, Inc.
Infinity Technology, Inc.

This procurement was conducted in accordance with FAR 15.3. The RFP prescribed three categories of evaluation factors: mission suitability, cost, and past performance. Offerors were advised that the mission suitability factor was the most important factor, the past performance factor and cost factor were equal in importance, and each was less important than the mission suitability factor, and all evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, were significantly more important than cost or price. Mission suitability was numerically scored (1000 points) and consisted of four subfactors: management approach (450 points) key personnel (250 points) staffing approach (200 points) and Safety and Health (100 points).

The proposals were analyzed for accuracy and compliance with Government requirements, and based upon the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE), a most probable cost was established. The past performance factor considered the performance of the prime and major subcontractors in efforts similar to the effort associated with this RFP, and the quality of relevant work performed in the past. Past performance was given an adjective rating without a numerical score.

II. Disposition and Evaluation of Initial Proposals

All proposals were evaluated consistent with the criteria identified in the RFP. The initial evaluation findings of the SEC were presented to me, the Source Selection Authority (SSA), on December 3, 2001. I established a competitive range of the most highly rated proposals. The competitive range included AI Signal Research, Incorporated (ASRI), Analytical Services, Incorporated (ASI) and Infinity Technology, Incorporated.

AD Rendon Communications, Incorporated was not included in the competitive range because it did not have a reasonable chance of being selected for award. AD Rendon Communications received a rating of "Poor" under mission suitability factor. While they received a few strengths in mission suitability, they also received one deficiency and numerous weaknesses. Under the past performance factor, AD Rendon Communications received a rating of "Good." AD Rendon Communications' mission suitability rating was lower than those firms included in the competitive range and their past performance factor rating was equal to the lowest rated proposal found to be within the competitive range. AD Rendon Communications' proposed costs and most probable costs were over 10% higher than all other proposals received.

On December 4, 2001, the three firms included in the competitive range, ASRI, ASI and Infinity, were advised of their status and were requested to provide a written response to specific weaknesses and clarification issues identified during the evaluation of their proposals. The December 4 letters established December 17, 2001 as a due date for the receipt of all written responses. This letter also established dates for oral discussions with all firms. Accordingly, December 18, 2001 was scheduled as the date for oral discussions with Infinity; December 20, 2001 was scheduled for ASI and December 21, 2001 was scheduled for ASRI. All discussions were held on the dates scheduled. On January 4, 2002, ASRI, ASI and Infinity were advised that discussions were completed and the due date for receipt of final proposal revisions was January 9, 2002. Revisions were received on this date and were subsequently evaluated consistent with the criteria identified in the RFP.

III. Evaluation of Final Proposal Revisions

As a result of the discussion process and the final proposal revisions (FPRs), all three offerors in the competitive range were able to eliminate all of their mission suitability weaknesses and raise their numeric mission suitability score. The past performance adjective rating for all three offerors did not change. A new most probable cost was determined for each offeror based on revisions contained in the FPRs. The final evaluation results of the FPR are summarized below.

AI Signal Research, Incorporated

In the mission suitability factor, this FPR did not have any deficiencies or weaknesses. This FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good" in mission suitability. Under the management approach subfactor, this FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good." ASRI received 3 significant strengths and 2 strengths. The significant strengths included: (1) a thorough and well-defined approach and method to fulfill WBS requirements, a superior approach and detailed description of activities to be performed, (2) a superior understanding of the importance of internal and external communication where they have organized for key points of contact at all customer levels, and (3) a thorough understanding of MSFC core values which parallel those of the offeror.

Under the key personnel subfactor, ASRI received an adjective rating of "Excellent." ASRI received 3 significant strengths and no other strengths. The significant strengths included: (1) the proposed Media Operations Supervisor having 3 years experience as a media specialist and 3 years as Chief of Media Operations in support of the CaER Directorate, as well as a BA in Journalism, provides a high level of confidence he can perform the effort required. (2) The proposed Program Manager having been the Program Manager under the existing contract for the past year. Prior to the position of Program Manager, she was Chief of Exhibit Operations. This experience, coupled with glowing remarks from customers concerning her performance, provides a high level of confidence she can perform the effort required. (3) The proposed Exhibit Operations Supervisor has a B.A. in Public Relations and a M.A. in Communication with 1 year experience as the Outreach Lead/Acting Chief of Exhibits, and 3 years experience as an Outreach Coordinator in support of the CaER Directorate. This experience provides a high level of confidence she can perform the effort required under this contract.

Under the staffing approach subfactor, ASRI received an adjective rating of "Very Good." ASRI received 1 significant strength and 1 strength. The significant strength included the offeror's plans on staffing a high percentage of the effort with existing personnel and hiring an additional four people to meet the new requirements. The offeror indicated it already had commitments from 3 of the 4 people to perform the new effort. In addition, the offeror's turnover rate over the last 3 years was 3 percent for exempt and 4 percent for non-exempt employees.

Under the safety and health subfactor, ASRI received an adjective rating of "Excellent." ASRI received 1 significant strength and 1 strength. The significant strength included: a thoroughly written draft Safety and Health plan that clearly establishes that ASRI is committed to providing a safe and healthful work environment for all employees from top-level management down, specific safety/health responsibilities have been delegated for each working group, and a commitment to ensure that all employees are trained/certified for the job they are performing.

In the past performance factor, ASRI received an adjective rating of "Excellent." ASRI received 1 significant strength and 3 strengths. The significant strength recognized the offeror's highly relevant experience in PWS areas 2.0, 3.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 and 10.0 as well as in PWS areas of 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

In the cost factor, ASRI had a most probable cost of \$32.2 million. Adjustments made to ASRI's FPR in establishing a most probable cost included: an adjustment to G&A ceiling rates.

Analytical Services, Incorporated

In the mission suitability factor, this FPR did not have any deficiencies or weaknesses. This FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good" in mission suitability. Under the management approach subfactor, this FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good." ASI received 3 significant strengths and 4 strengths (one of which resulted from revisions made in the FPR). The significant strengths included: (1) clear lines of internal and external authority for key personnel, systems and procedures for effective reporting of contract activities, (2) superior understanding of the activities involved in planning, scheduling, processing, controlling and completing PWS tasks and (3) a thorough understanding of core values and how ASI's values align with MSFC's.

Under the key personnel subfactor, ASI received an adjective rating of "Very Good." ASI received 2 significant strengths and 3 strengths (two of which resulted from revisions made in the FPR). The significant strengths included: (1) the proposed Corporate Liaison (proposed at 20% of her time which is adequate for the effort to be performed) has extensive management experience, a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, and a Masters of Public Administration in Personnel Management. (2) The proposed Visual Arts and Technical Coordinator has more than 10 years of relevant experience in visual arts with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration/Visual Communication and Commercial Arts.

Under the staffing approach subfactor, ASI received an adjective rating of "Good." ASI received no significant strengths and 4 strengths (two of which resulted from revisions made in the FPR).

Under the safety and health subfactor, ASI received an adjective rating of "Excellent." ASI received 2 significant strengths and no other strengths. The significant strengths included: (1) a superior draft Safety and Health plan indicating that ASI puts the safety

and health of their employees first in their operations, well defined roles of responsibility for being familiar with the Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) Program at MSFC, S&H plan indicates that ASI had thoroughly researched MSFC requirements as very up-to-date information was used throughout the document. (2) The offeror provided a thorough risk assessment of safety and health factors and recommended appropriate mitigation.

In the past performance factor, ASI received an adjective rating of "Very Good." ASI received 1 significant strength and 2 strengths. The significant strength recognized inputs from questionnaires provided by customers of ASI on the quality of its performance on their contracts.

In the cost factor, ASI had a most probable cost of \$33.8 million. Adjustments made to ASI's FPR in establishing a most probable cost included: an adjustment to G&A ceiling rates.

Infinity Technology, Incorporated

In the mission suitability factor, this FPR did not have any deficiencies or weaknesses. This FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good" in mission suitability. Under the management approach subfactor, this FPR received an adjective rating of "Very Good." Infinity received 2 significant strengths and 4 strengths (one of which resulted from revisions made in the FPR). The significant strengths included: (1) a thorough organizational structure with minimal layers of management, a superior approach to teaming/subcontracting, and (2) a training plan for every employee matching people and resources to the tasks to be performed under the contract.

Under the key personnel subfactor, Infinity received an adjective rating of "Very Good." Infinity received 1 significant strength and 1 strength. The significant strength included: a Communications and Media Coordinator, whose experience provides a high level of confidence, was proposed to manage PWS 10.0 and 7.1 (critical areas of the PWS). He has numerous years of Government media experience and has worked for private industry in media relations as coordinator for the IGUG trade shows.

Under the staffing approach subfactor, Infinity received an adjective rating of "Very Good." Infinity received 1 significant strength and 4 strengths (one of which resulted from revisions made in the FPR). The significant strength included: a well-planned schedule for a 30-day seamless transition from the existing contract, a unique plan between the parties to the contract that will ensure a successful phase-in and the offeror proposed to retain a high percentage of incumbent personnel.

Under the safety and health subfactor, Infinity received an adjective rating of "Good." Infinity received no significant strengths and 2 strengths.

In the past performance factor, Infinity received an adjective rating of "Good." Infinity received no significant strengths, 5 strengths and 1 significant weakness. The significant weakness included: customer's input relative to past performance revealed a problem with offeror making payroll in a timely fashion during the April 2000 timeframe on its Administrative Services Contract at MSFC.

In the cost factor, Infinity had a most probable cost of \$33.5 million. Adjustments made to Infinity's FPR in establishing a most probable cost included: an adjustment to G&A ceiling rates and overhead rate.

IV. Decision

Immediately following the SEC's presentation on January 25, 2002, I met in executive session with key senior advisors who had heard the presentation. Their views and guidance were solicited. With respect to the process and findings, we concluded that the evaluation plan was followed and that the findings were well documented. We noted that the discussion process was well utilized and that the offerors in the competitive range were able to eliminate all of their mission suitability weaknesses. Infinity and ASI made significant increases in their mission suitability scores. The past performance adjective rating for all three offerors did not change.

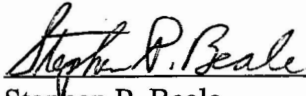
With regard to Infinity, we concluded that they provided no advantage over ASI or ASRI. Infinity had the lowest mission suitability scores, the lowest past performance ranking and provided no advantage in the cost factor.

We next compared the findings between ASRI and ASI. In the mission suitability factor we noted that their overall scores were quite close with a very slight advantage to ASRI. We did note that while the advantage was extremely slight, ASRI scored higher in three out of four subfactors. ASRI scored higher in management approach, key personnel, and staffing approach. These were the three most highest rated subfactors within the mission suitability factor. ASI demonstrated a slight advantage in the safety and health subfactor, although we noted that both ASI and ASRI were both rated excellent. After considerable discussion, notwithstanding the slight advantage of ASRI, the ratings did not provide a demonstrable distinction.

We next considered the cost factor. We noted that ASRI's cost, both as proposed and most probable, was lower than ASI's. In fact, ASRI submitted the lowest cost proposal of all of the offers. ASRI's cost was approximately \$1.5 million dollars lower than that of ASI. The SEC had a high degree of confidence in the cost assessments. We agreed with this confidence. In probing the cost differential we noted that ASI proposed a significantly higher fee rate than ASRI. We also noted that ASI's G&A rates were not competitive with ASRI. Upon conclusion of our consideration of cost we concluded that ASRI had a clear advantage.

We next considered the past performance factor. We noted that the SEC rated ASRI "Excellent" and ASI as "Very Good." We agreed with these assessments and upon review of the underlying supporting data we determined that ASRI had an advantage over ASI. The primary distinguishing attribute for ASRI was that they had more directly related experience on more elements of the PWS.

After polling all my advisors and getting their inputs, I concluded that ASRI provided the greatest advantage to the Government based on their advantage in cost and past performance. Consequently, I selected ASRI for award of the CaER Directorate Support Services Contract.



Stephen P. Beale
Source Selection Authority

2-7-02

Date